Henry Armin Herzog, ...*And Heaven Shed No Tears,* London 1995, pp. 344, add. 19

In his diary, the author, born in April 1917 in Spiska Stara Wieś, included a lot of interesting informations relating to his personal history. His recollections concern the years 1939–1945 which he spent at first in Kraków, his home city, and then towards the end of 1941, in Rzeszów, where he had moved together with his parents, brothers and sister. He managed to escape from the ghetto in Rzeszów thanks to the help of his Polish friends. Later on, he found himself in Hungary (at the Csorgo camp) and finally, in June 1944 in Slovakia, where he joined the Soviet underground guerilla units. In the spring of 1945, he made his way to Romania and then returned to Kraków for a brief period. He finally left Europe for the United States in 1948.

Henry Armin Herzog's book is an interesting record of the experiences of a man whose personal fortune reflects an integral part of the experiences of Jews at the time of the Holocaust, a time which exerted a decisive influence on the post-war fortunes and attitudes of the Jewry. In many cases, the above-mentioned experiences played a decisive role in the shaping of their very emotional attitudes. The tragic plight of the author of the diary defined his way of perceiving human behavior and motives in the face of Jewish tragedy which was often taking place in full view of indifferent observers. These observers were none other than the Poles. On many an occasion, the author concludes, quite unequivocally, that in reality, the hostility of the Poles towards the Jews may in fact be compared with that of the Germans. The above opinion is not changed by the attitude represented by his Polish friends Tytus and Luiza Zwoliński as well as Władysław Łopatowski and his family who had offered him assistance on many an occasion. Contrary to the behavior of the Slovaks, Hungarians or Romanians, Henry Armin Herzog defines the attitude of the Poles towards the Jews as definitely hostile and he supports his conclusion with numerous examples. According to Herzog, the behavior of the Poles towards the Jews, both before the war and during the years 1939–1945, was determined by anti-Semitic sentiment; the above attitude included the relations of the Poles towards assimilated Jews. It was only the Socialists who were basically free of anti-Semitic sentiments. And so, the attitude towards the Jews at the beginning of the German occupation of Kraków manifested itself, in many cases of the Poles cooperating with the Germans; thus, the latter were often informed about the apartments of well-to-do Jews, or else Jewish citizens were denounced while queuing up for food (p. 25, add. 31); the Poles often looted and ransacked Jewish apartments with the permission of the German authorities. Beginning in the autumn of 1939, more and more anti-Semitic articles appeared in the Polish-language press which the Poles were not entirely opposed to (p. 35). Even when the Jews were made to clear the snow from the streets in the wintertime, all they could count on was derision on the part of the Polish population; the author quotes an example of such derisive comments, saying that it was often said that, "at long last, the Jewish parasites were doing something useful"[1]. The Poles were also reluctant to give back the jewelry

[1] P. 41; E. Friedman, *Daleka droga do domu,* Kraków 1997, p. 27: "The Jews were made to clear the snow (...) The shovel was twice the size of me, and the people helped me carry it (...) We swept the snow from the streets but it continued to fall in large quantities. We also cleared it from in front of the stores

or money which the Jews had asked them to keep for them and they looked for opportunities to purchase Jewish property for as little as possible. When comparing the attitudes of the inhabitants of Kraków and Rzeszów towards the Jews, Henry Armin Herzog is generally of the opinion that the latter were more friendly towards them, particularly after the German attack on the USSR. What also deserves special attention, is Herzog's description of the functioning of the ghetto and of the Jewish council in Rzeszów. As regards more comprehensive analyses of the situation, the author has had to rely, out of necessity, on other people's opinions. Nonetheless, these deserve our attention as they contain certain very characteristic opinions which recur in various diaries and memoirs.

For instance, a very characteristic statement is the one in accordance with which the Polish, or more directly, the Home Army underground fighters are referred to as right-wing and anti-Semite. Hence, the attitude towards the Jews who are murdered, according to the author, is displayed with a similar passion and fury as was displayed by the German forces. These kinds of opinions relate, to an even greater extent, to the situation in post-war Poland which the author devotes relatively a lot of attention to, also to that the denouncers who reported on the whereabouts of the Jews during the war (p. 146, 166, 167). What is also very characteristic, is the author's assessment of the dominant feelings towards the Jewish population in 1945. According to him, it was difficult to come back to a country soaked in Jewish blood, where many people had blood on their hands, and where the decree concerning the return of Jewish property to its rightful owners was received with enmity by the society; it was difficult to return to a country where the old prejudices concerning ritual murder were being revived and anti-Jewish feelings were being nurtured by the Catholic church (p. 276–279). The book contains an interesting description of the events which took place in Kraków in August 1945, as well as information about the Jewish pogrom in Kielce which although it does not bring any new insights into the tragedy – as is quite understandable – does, in a characteristic way, seem to emphasize the point that the anti-Semitic climate characteristic of pre-war Poland was, in fact, propitious to the Germans who created concentration camps for the Jews on its territory. When describing the situation in post-war Poland, the author paradoxically accepts the division into left and right, in accordance with the criteria adopted by the Polish Workers' Party (c.f. remarks on p. 296); however, at the same time, he seems to admit that the Poles who gave shelter to the Jews during the war, were beginning to have all kinds of problems because of this action after the war (p. 299). The majority of the examples which H. A. Herzog quotes, seem to support the thesis that all of the Jews who returned to Poland after the war, would no doubt sooner or later wish to leave this unfriendly country.

The author's attitude toward the events which he describes is quite understandable, as they are connected with his personal experiences whose authenticity it is difficult to question. Yet every description of events which makes up his personal experience, or else is based on information that is recognized as authentic, is pervaded with an emotional load which defines the temperature of a given situation[2]. This serves to convey to the reader, in a conscious or subconscious manner, a certain generalization which in the case of every author of memoirs, becomes the only true measure of what is real. It also serves to formulate statements referring not only to concrete events, but it influences one's assessment of the described situation, which leads to a generalization, often formulated in a categorical way. At times like this, the conclusions begin to lead a life of their own and, what is worse, they are accepted even by professional researchers and scholars who sometimes lack the necessary dose of criticism. Yet, by accepting them, the scholars in question appear to meet some people's expectations.

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belonging to the Poles; the latter often brought us something warm to drink. I shall never forget this". See also: p. 88.

[2] L. Cytryn Bialer, *Dla Ciebie Nelly*, Olsztyn 1998, p. 47.

This is why many statements which reflect one's individual and genuine experiences, appear to be only the background against which one has to create an image of a far more complex reality. This definitely concerns the Polish-Jewish relations in the tragic years of the war, but it does not refer exclusively to them. Henry Armin Herzog's chief merit here consists in bringing to the reader's attention all of those events which, though somewhat shocking to contemporary man, are conducive to the discovery of the truth about us and our past, however difficult and painful.

Andrzej K. Link-Lenczowski